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Harold Weisberg
7627 Old Receiver Rd.
Frederick, MD 21701

December 30, 1991.

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

First of all, thank you for taking the time to write and forward the nasty missive you received. Frankly, my frustration level is too low, and I am too old to bother with these schmucks.

Since I do not possess the sophistication of an experienced writer, if I were to express my feelings to them candidly, I would have to resort to invectives. Firstly, that would pull me down to their level, but most importantly, it would be contra-productive in terms of getting the attention of the people I would want to address.

As I view it, the recent Israeli haters are motivated primarily by two factors: 1) An a priori support for any group they perceive as the underdog and 2) a hidden or latent agenda of antisemitism. In either case, one would have to deal with emotionalism and, as you must know, the use of logic and empirical data would be to no avail. Talking to them would be lke the proverbial banging one's head against a stone wall.

As to the majority of the American public, where a fair and well-reasoned approach may make some impact, one must face realities. Nowadays, even if understood, the 10 billion guarantee is viewed as a considerable risk, especially since no one has offered a specific history of Israel's meeting its obligation. It is a fact that Israel ranks near the top of countries receiving foreign aid. Moreover, and most importantly, little is said about the benefits the U.S. derives from assisting Israel. It is the only reliable ally in the oil-rich Middle East, etc. - you know the arguments.

Most distressing to me is the poor or even non-existing public relation work on the part of Israel and its friends. After all, the very existence of Israel depends on the continuous support of the U.S., and although we can point to the many benefits America obtains from the U.S.-Israel partnership, the American people's good will is absolutely essential.

A great handicap Israel's supporters face is the arrogant attitude of Mssrs. Shamir and Sharon. When a member of the Israel congress called President Bush a lier, there should have been a forceful reprimand from Prime Minister Shamir within minutes, instead of a tepid comment by a lesser official several days later, and this after much damage had been done in the often not too friendly American press. To be sure, Shamir was a terrorist with the Stern gang, but still there is a difference from the Arabs terrorist who attacks non-involved citizens in their own countries, and bomb planes indiscriminately. No official comments have come forth.

At another time, Shamir publicly urged the U.S.Congress to fight Mr. Bush on the matter of the $10 billion guarantee, an interference in a sovereign country's affairs that even a banana republic would not tolerate. And Mr. Sharon's remarks, even if one would basically agrees with his policy regarding building in the occupied territories, were unnecessarily arrogant and abrasive, certainly not conducive to building good will with the American public.

Frankly, I support Israel and consider her cause to be a just one, accepting its government's occasional missteps as indigenous to all governments. However, should any Isreali government ever act contrary to the real national interests of the United States, there is little doubt where most American Jews will stand, and the government of Israel must be aware of that.

Am I suggesting passivity? Of course not, and I hope to continue to speak out. But as I mentioned above, we must take a realistic approach, avoiding the tunnel vision of the mindless militant. Blowing one's stack should not be the purpose of articulating one's view's -- one should strive to convince those who are not burdened by ingrained hatred and a rigid mind.

While some Jewish-American organizations are going into convulsions over a creche being placed on the lawn of a firehouse in some little town, they fail to produce well-reasoned and documented paper for publication and as aids to the local people who want to present a meaningful case for Israel to the public. The average person, including myself, has neither the time, nor the energy, nor the pre-requisite skills.

Thanking you for brearing with me so far, and taking this opportunity to wish you a healthy, happy, and peaceful new year, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Leo Sperling